

Statement of Senator Saxby Chambliss, Acting Chairman

**Before the Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate**

on

**The Nominations of
Richard C. Wesley to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit;
J. Ronnie Greer to be U.S. District Judge, Eastern District of Tennessee;
Thomas M. Hardiman to be U.S. District Judge,
Western District of Pennsylvania;
Mark R. Kravitz to be U.S. District Judge, District of Connecticut; and
John A. Woodcock to be U.S. District Judge, District of Maine**

May 22, 2003

Today the Committee has the privilege of considering the nominations of five outstanding lawyers to be federal judges. I commend President Bush for nominating each of them, and I look forward to their testimony. Since we have so many senators here this morning who wish to speak in support of these nominees, I will keep my remarks brief.

The first nominee from whom we will hear is **Richard Wesley**, who has been nominated for a position on the Second Circuit. A graduate of Cornell law school, Judge Wesley's distinguished career included private practice and a stint as assistant counsel to the Minority Leader of the New York State Assembly before he was elected to the Assembly himself in 1983. He began his judicial career in 1987, when he was elected to the Seventh Judicial District of the Supreme Court of

New York. He then served as the Supervising Judge for the Criminal Courts within the Supreme Court, and in 1994 Governor Cuomo appointed him to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. In December 1996, Governor Pataki nominated him to the New York Court of Appeals, the highest court in the state. He was confirmed by a unanimous vote of the New York State Senate on January 14, 1997. Judge Wesley's sixteen years as a judge at both the trial and appellate levels, plus his prior service as a state assemblyman, have given him the experience and background to make an outstanding Second Circuit judge.

In addition to Judge Wesley, we will hear from four nominees for the federal trial court bench. **Ronnie Greer**, who has been nominated for the Eastern District of Tennessee, has extensive experience in both the private and public sectors of the legal community. For the past 20 years, Mr. Greer has maintained a diverse general legal practice consisting of considerable litigation in the areas of state and federal criminal defense, personal injury, and workers compensation. For eight years, Mr. Greer also served as a senator in the Tennessee General Assembly, where he was a member of the Judiciary Committee and chairman of the Environment, Conservation and Tourism Committee.

Our nominee for the Western District of Pennsylvania is **Thomas Hardiman**. Mr. Hardiman, currently a partner with the Reed Smith law firm, graduated from Georgetown University Law Center, where he served for two years on the *Georgetown Law Journal*. Despite the demands of a private practice career that has included tenures with several prestigious firms, he has made ample time for pro bono and volunteer work, including eight years of work as a volunteer for Big Brothers / Big Sisters of Greater Pittsburgh.

Our nominee for the District of Connecticut is another Hoya. **Mark Kravitz** attended Georgetown University Law Center, where he was the managing editor of the *Georgetown Law Journal*. Following graduation, he clerked for Third Circuit Judge James Hunter III and for then Justice William Rehnquist on the U.S. Supreme Court. In recognition of his outstanding legal skills, he has been named in the publication *The Best Lawyers In America*. Mr. Kravitz is currently a partner with the law firm of Wiggin & Dana.

John Woodcock, the final district court nominee we will consider today, has been nominated for the District of Maine. He possesses over 25 years of litigation experience and has been involved in 47 separate appeals to the Maine Supreme Judicial Court on issues ranging from criminal law to trust law. He has also

volunteered his time as a member of several community boards and he serves as the attorney-coach for the local high school mock trial team. The Committee recently received a letter from former Clinton Administration Secretary of Defense William Cohen praising Mr. Woodcock's skills as a litigator. He writes, "I have known John Woodcock for many years....The U.S. District Court for the District of Maine has a long practice of excellence in its judicial appointments and the nomination of John Woodcock is in every way consistent with that tradition." I will submit a copy of this letter for the record, without objection.

I am pleased to have these nominees before the Committee today, and I look forward to hearing from them.